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ENGLISH POLICY TOWARD AMERICA IN 1790-1791

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2. *English Policy Toward America in 1790-1791.*

(*First Installment.*)

THE following documents, obtained from the English Public Record Office, illustrate England's American policy in 1790-1791, particularly at the period of the Nootka Sound episode. In the summer of 1789 Spain seized certain English ships which were on their way to establish a trading post at Nootka Sound. In the spring and summer of 1790 active preparations were made for war by both nations. France, denying the applicability of the family compact to her new situation, failed to render the effective support on which Spain relied, and a convention between England and Spain was signed October 28, 1790. In the intermediate period the United States was vitally affected.² At that time England retained the northwestern posts and encouraged the Indians to hold the Ohio River—indeed Lord Dorchester had apprehensions that Har-mar's expedition against the Indians was intended against the Brit-

² See Worthington C. Ford's *The United States and Spain in 1790*. Brooklyn, 1890.

ish post at Detroit. Expecting trouble and doubting the ability of the Union to hold the west, Lord Dorchester had for several years past been securing information on the attitude of the western settlers toward English control.¹ On April 17, 1790, the Lords of the Privy Council for Trade, wrote to Mr. Grenville, the Secretary of State for Home Affairs, that Vermont and the western settlements should be treated on the same basis; a liberal policy of commercial concession should be adopted, and "in a commercial view it will be for the Benefit of this Country to prevent Vermont and Kentucke and all the other settlements now forming in the Interior parts of the great Continent of North America, from becoming dependent on the Government of the United States, or on that of any other Foreign Country, and to preserve them on the contrary in a State of Independence, and to induce them to form Treaties of Commerce and Friendship with Great Britain."² This was the policy that Spain was contemporaneously applying to the leaders of Kentucky and Tennessee. Supporting the Creeks, Cherokees and other Indians of the Gulf region against American advance, and denying to the settlers the right to navigate the Mississippi, Spain intrigued with Wilkinson and her other pensioners in the West to secure the independency of Kentucky and Tennessee under Spanish protection.³ The United States tried to detach McGillivray, the Creek leader, from Spain by engaging him in a treaty at New York which was completed August 7, 1790.⁴ But McGillivray was associated in the Indian trade with the Scotch firm of Panton, Leslie and Co., of Pensacola, who had obtained from Spain the right to this trade by an arrangement under which Spain received £12,000 a year.⁵ McGillivray, therefore, kept in touch with Spain in spite of his American treaty, and at the same time explained to England that his action depended upon the fact that he saw that from the local situation of the Indians they could not expect effectual sup-

¹ See Roosevelt, *Winning of the West*, III. 129, n. 2; Winsor, *Westward Movement*, 350, 367, 389 ff.; Marshall, *Kentucky*; Butler, *Kentucky*; Green, *Spanish Conspiracy*, 292, 299; Gayarre, *Louisiana under Spanish Domination*, p. 235; and the sources in *Calendar Virginia State Papers*, IV. 555; *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1890, pp. 106, 108, 109, 131 ff.; Elliot's *Debates*, V. 97, 98, 100; *Drazer Collection*: Clark MSS.—Trip 1860, vi., p. 190. Thomas Marshall, of Kentucky, wrote to Washington in 1789 that Wilkinson had warned the governor of Louisiana in 1787 of the feasibility of the united British and Americans taking Louisiana and thence advancing to New Mexico in twenty days, and had urged "the great danger the Spanish interest in North America would be in from the British power, should that nation possess herself of the mouth of the Mississippi and thereby hold the two grand portals of North America, that river and the St. Lawrence." Butler, *Kentucky* (1836), appendix, p. 519.

² Chatham, MSS., Bde. 343. Compare *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1890, p. 132.

³ On McGillivray see Pickett, *Alabama*, II. 30 *et passim*.

⁴ *American St. Paps., Ind. Aff.*, I. 81. ⁵ *Rep. on Can. Ar.*, 1890, p. 153.

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port from her. McGillivray's rival among these Indians was William Augustus Bowles,¹ son of a Maryland planter who, in the Revolution, joined the British and served in the Floridas. Dismissed from the army, he went the Indians, adopted their costume, and built up a large following in opposition to McGillivray,² by securing goods through clandestine trade with the British West Indies. His memoirs give him a most romantic career, as portrait-painter, actor and forest diplomat, and relate how he led the Indians in the English service in the final operations against the Spaniards of Florida, in the Revolutionary War. In his London correspondence, in 1791, with Grenville he mentions that he is a half-pay officer in the British army. He had gone from the Bahamas to Quebec with some Cherokee chiefs, and Lord Dorchester had permitted him to present his case in person to the English government. In his letter to Grenville, Lord Dorchester suggested that these Indians' resentment against the states, arising from injudicious encroachments upon their territory, might be appeased by ensuring them a more liberal treatment under the King's protection. The party did not reach London until Spain and England had made peace, but Bowles nevertheless presented the memorial here, printed and, on the 7th of March following, Grenville wrote to Dorchester:

"Such of their requests as related to views of hostility against the United States have met with no kind of encouragement, but they will in some degree be gratified in their wish of intercourse with the British Dominions by an admission to the free posts [ports?] in His Majesty's West Indian Islands, supposing that they should find themselves in a situation to avail themselves of this indulgence."³

The distinction which Bowles gained from his British connection is shown in the report of Indian Commissioner Seagrove in 1792, after Bowles had been taken by the Spaniards.⁴ He says:

"Although Bowles is removed, such is the baneful effect of what he has done, that the strength of his party (even at this moment) in the Creek nation, is such, that we find General McGillivray compelled to submit to their will."

Bowles was enticed by the Spaniards into their hands in 1792, but was afterwards released and returned to give trouble to the

¹ On Bowles's career, besides the documents that follow, see *Authentic Memoirs of William Augustus Bowles, Esq.*, etc., London, 1791; Perin du lac, *Voyage*, etc., ch. 52, p. 456; Milfort, *Sejour dans la Nation Creek*; Pickett, *Alabama*, II. 115; *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1890, pp. xlii, 153 ff.; *American State Papers, Ind. Aff.*, I. 264, 295-299, 304, 651.

² *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1890, p. 153. In this interview in 1790, McGillivray gives his version of the actions of Bowles and of his lieutenant, Dalton.

³ *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1890, p. xlii.

⁴ *American State Papers, Ind. Aff.*, I. 296; cf. 264. See also Jefferson, *Writings* (1895), V. 404, and Washington, *Writings*, XII. 159.

house of Panton.¹ England disavowed his pretensions and he was again seized by Spain and died in prison in 1804.

The interest of England in the Florida possessions which she had so recently lost was not unnatural and Pitt's desire to recover his "Southern Farms" finds illustration in this material. But the most significant documents are those which deal with Miranda. After the American Revolution this remarkable man, visiting the United States, England, Prussia, Russia, and France, succeeded in interesting the great leaders of these countries in his plans. He attracted Hamilton by his great scheme of South American Revolution; he corresponded with Frederick the Great; was patronized by Catharine; won Pitt's adhesion to his ideas in 1790 and again in 1796; and interested Brissot, Le Brun, and Dumouriez in his plan for revolutionizing Spanish America in 1792.³ This was followed by the attempt of Genet to secure Louisiana and Florida. The relations of Miranda to Pitt and to leading American Federalists like Hamilton and Rufus King in the period 1796-1798 cannot be here considered, nor the closely tangled web of intrigue that was woven by England, France, Spain and American frontiersmen like Senator Blount for the possession of the approaches to the Mississippi valley in the years that preceded the Louisiana Purchase. After his unsuccessful attempts at stirring up South American revolt in 1806 and 1810, Miranda died in prison at Cadiz in 1816. The significance of the documents presented in this connection lies in part in their evidence that in 1790 under Miranda's influence military preparations were inaugurated by England which had for one of their objective points the city of New Orleans, and more remotely Mexico and South America.

The attitude of Washington's government toward the Nootka Sound episode is highly interesting both because it was the first serious question of high diplomacy that engaged the new government, and even more because it gave occasion for Jefferson definitely to formulate a policy with respect to the control of the Mississippi which affected his subsequent attitude at the time of the Louisiana Purchase. During July and August, Beckwith, Dor-

¹ For the later career of Bowles see *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1890, p. xlii.

² Recent publications have cast new light on Miranda. See AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW, III. 654, 674; VI. 509. The last reference gives Popham's survey of Miranda's career, based on interviews with him. Hubert Hall, Esq., of the Public Record Office, presents in the *Athenaeum* for April 19, 1902 (p. 498), a valuable study of the relations between Pitt and Miranda based on the Chatham Papers, portions of which are, by Mr. Hall's kind assistance, here first printed. Compare the older work, Antepara, *South American Emancipation and the Edinburgh Review*, January, 1809 (xiii, 295).

³ For French designs on Spanish lands in North America at the period of Genet's mission, see AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW, III. 654, 490, and *Report of American Historical Association*, 1896, p. 930, and 1897, p. 569.

chester's agent, was holding conversations with leading members of the Federal Government, and especially with Hamilton, who asserted our determination to control New Orleans.¹ Jefferson, alarmed at the prospect of England's control of Louisiana and Florida, wrote in July to Monroe: "Embraced from St. Croix to St. Mary's on one side by their possessions, on the other by their fleet, we need not hesitate to say that they would soon find means to unite to them all the territory covered by the ramifications of the Mississippi," and he looked forward to "bloody and eternal war or indissoluble confederacy" with England.² In case of combined action he hoped that the United States would receive the Floridas and New Orleans, leaving Louisiana to England. Upon our representative in Spain he urged the propriety of convincing that nation that England was a dangerous neighbor to Mexico, and that Spain's safest policy would be to cede us the navigation of the Mississippi, and all territory east of it on condition that we should guarantee to her all her possessions on the western waters of that river.³

On August 23d, Secretary Knox instructed Governor St. Clair to assure the British that Harmar's expedition was not against their posts. On the 26th Washington issued a proclamation against invasion of the Indian lands in the southwest, in opposition to the proposed colonization by the Yazoo company. Having thus guarded against trouble with England and Spain, on August 27th, Washington asked the opinions of his cabinet, and the Vice President, upon the answer to be given in case Dorchester asked permission to march troops across our territory from Detroit to the Mississippi, or what should be done if this were undertaken without leave. The replies to this interesting query varied. Hamilton would sooner grant permission than risk hostility and the loss of the west;⁴ Jefferson would avoid answer, but permit the passage if necessary;⁵ Adams would give a dignified refusal and if England crossed, await indemnity.⁶

The outcome made it unnecessary to choose sides on the momentous questions involved in the Nootka Sound episode, but the possession of the Mississippi valley, the Gulf of Mexico, and the choice of European allies seemed for a time at stake.

I desire to express my thanks to Hubert Hall, Esq., of the Public Record Office, for his skill and courtesy, in enabling me to procure these documents.

FREDERICK J. TURNER.

¹ *Rep. Can. Ar.*, 1890, pp. xxxv, 160-164, 276-278, and Hamilton, *Works*, IV. 5, 32, 66.

² Jefferson, *Writings*, V. 198, 199, 225. These papers constitute an admirable view of the whole problem of our relations to Spanish America and England at that time.

³ Jefferson, *Writings*, V. 229, ff.; compare his propositions to Short, the *chargé d'affaires* in France, *ibid.*, p. 218, and to G. Morris, our agent in England, p. 224.

⁴ Hamilton, *Works*, IV. 20, 66.

⁵ Jefferson, *Writings*, V. 238.

⁶ Adams, *Works*, VIII. 497.

[*Miranda's Plans.*]I. P. ALLAIRE [R. D.] TO SIR GEORGE YONGE, M. P.¹*Sir*

Since my last a Vessell has Arrived from New Orleans with an Accot. that the Inhabitants of Mexico have taken Arms and possessed themselves of the Mines that the Governor sent 2000 Soldiers to Retake them which were Repulsed. the Insurgents were than 7000 strong—Liberty spreads her Wings from East to West

I remain with the Utmost Respect

Sir,

Your V. H. Servt

P. ALLAIRE

New York 6 Feb 1790

II. FRANCISCO DE MIRANDA TO WILLIAM PITT.²*Sir:*

Having perhaps been importunate to you without wishing it, in fact by the repetition of my letters and messages to you, upon the final termination of my settlement in this Country, as the retard was become rather disagreeable to me I shall take the liberty to recapitulate here as in one point of view, all that has passed on my affairs. It will ease my mind and may serve you as a memorandum (if necessary) in order to facilitate the expedition of this business, which you have certainly given me every reason to suppose, is determined and decided.

When my friend Governor Pownall³ proposed, and explained to you the *grand Plan* I had to communicate to the British minister for the advantages and interest of the English nation, united to those of South America, it was accepted as a measure certainly to be adopted in case of a War with Spain—and in this supposition I was desired to wait upon you at Hollwood where I had the honour to meet you by appointment on the 14th February 1790—There we had a very long conference upon the subject, in which, the nature of my Proposals; the new form of Gov-

¹ F. O. America H. The address is known from the endorsement.

² Chatham MSS.

³ For reference to Pownall's previous plans, see AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW, III. 328.

⁴ In the Chatham MSS. Bde. 345, undated, but with Miranda's papers of 1790 is a plan for a constitution for the Spanish American colonies. The boundaries included on the north the line passing by the middle of the Mississippi from its mouth to its source, and thence continued straight toward the west by the forty-fifth degree of north latitude to the Pacific. On the east the line was the Atlantic Ocean from Cape Horn to the Gulf of Mexico and thence to the mouth of the Mississippi, but Brazil and Guiana were not included nor the islands along the coast, except Cuba "since the port of Havana is the key to the Gulf of Mexico." The government was to be mixed and adapted to that of Great Britain. The executive power was to be lodged in an Inca, under the title of Emperor with hereditary succession. The upper chamber was to be composed of senators or caziques nominated by the Inca for life. Detailed provisions were made for elections and for local chambers and courts. Compare Pownall's scheme.

ernment⁴—intended to be introduced in South-America, my Personal circumstances, and actual situation etc. were fully explained, and the Whole admitted as a Plan beneficial to this Country and to be put in execution certainly in case only of a War with Spain.—Upon this Condition and Solemn promise I was desired by you to write down, either in English or French all the purport of our Conversation, adding a Statement of the whole produces of South America, the Exports and imports from Spain, the military and naval forces in both countrys, their Population etc. and to forward it to you with proper safety—which I did on the 5th March 1790, with as much accuracy and detail as I possibly could.

On the 6 of May next I received a *Note* from you by your private Secretary Joseph Smith Esq. requesting to meet you that night if possible at 9. o clock.—And in consequence I had the honour to wait upon you at White-hall, where you did me the favour besides of introducing me to the Secretary of State Mr. Grenville (now Lord Grenville).—We had a long conference—upon the subject of the preparations for a War with Spain, in consequence of the occurrences at Nootka Sound. The disposition of the People in South America towards joining the English for their independency against the Spaniards etc. And you thanked me for the Papers I had sent to you, shewing them to me in a green-box you had by you, in going to meet the Cabinet Council. Giving me new assurances of the Execution of my *Plans* if unfortunately a War as it apiered should take place between the two Countrys.—And pointing to me the same chanel of Mr. Smith, to convey with safety any thing I might think worth communicating to you.

Various interviews took place at your House in Downing Street, in the time that the great Armament, and Spanish negociations were going on; in which I explicitly desired that a sufficient annual suport should be granted to me (as a *loan* only, till I could come to the possession of my property when I meant to repay every thing advanced to me) being now deprived of all income from my Estate in South America and having given up all my Commissions and Connection with the Court of Madrid; even with the Spanish Ambassador Marquis del Campo.—You, then was pleased to say, that in three or four weeks you should be able to answer my request; and that any sum of money I should want in

In the Chatham MSS. Bdle. 345, is also the draft of a proclamation, dated August 3, 1790, to be issued to the inhabitants of South America on the landing of an expeditionary force. It offers certain articles containing proposals for a continental government. Amnesty was offered to those who wished to leave. The officials were to be bona fide citizens, including a governor (a native noble) for five years, an elective supreme council for a term of four years, the regidores and alcaldes to be continued. The inquisition was to be abolished, the clergy to retain the tithes and the clerical courts. The revenue was to be continued, but collected by natives. The law courts were to be composed of natives. The governor and council might employ military and naval forces, and were to be authorized to make a treaty of federal alliance and commerce with Great Britain and with all powers that should recognize the independence of the country. For the time all legislative power was to be vested in the governor and council.

the meantime you was ready to suply me with, and that I should hear from you in two or three days there upon—I never received any money, which might be owing to circumstances I am not acquainted with.

Some time after, I presented to you the *Plan of Government* and mode of Legislation, I thought proper to be introduced in South America according to the principles of *Freedom* and *Independency*, we had agreed upon as a fundamental principle¹—You seemed pleased with it, and begged to leave it with you for the farder perusal, and consideration. We proceeded talking about the Plan of carrying on the War, and attacking the Spaniards in America, wishing me to point out the *places* by which it should be necessary to begin . . . I said that it was a mater of very great importance ; and that I had considered the Subject in general very much, I had not brought it yet to that precision that it required ; but in a few days I should be ready to answer the question fully. I suggested at the same time other efficacious measures ; such as engaging a few of the Ex-Jesuits natives of South America and now exiled by the King of Spain in the Pope's dominions ; whose names and place of abode I had with me and was very sure might be engaged for such a noble purpose. You earnestly adopted the measure requesting me to send you the information without any loss of time which I did immediately, transmitting to you the names and places of residence of 300 of them that were alive in the year 1786 when I visited Italy. I forwarded also to you at the same time, by your Request, all my private Papers concerning the two last insurrections hapened at *Lima* and *Santa Fee* both in the year 1781 ; which authentic documents might give you the most satisfactory account of the minds and disposition of the People towards the Spanish Government ; the strength and number of the militia ; small force of the regular Troops ; and every thing hapened at those two curious events ; which shew plainly how ripe the general mass of the people was for emancipation, if the delicate points of their *Religion* and *independency* is one properly explained and

Few days after I waited upon you with my *Plan of Attack*, and *Operations* digested ; and I had the honour to shew to you the Whole upon the Maps and private Plans I had with me, to your satisfaction ; leaving with you the Plan and defenses of the Havana by your Request. —You did not mention, then, any thing to me relative to my previous demand of an annual suport, tho' the promised term had expired ; and only repeated the offer c any money I should want, which I never had received nor requested again. You asked me besides, if the Marquis del Campo had not made lately any advances to me ? I answer'd that with the present views, I had given up all my pretensions in the Court of Madrid, and never had seen D. Bernardo del Campo since I wrote last to the Count de Florida blanca, and to his Catholic Majesty the present King, some time previous to those last disagreements with England ratifying my anterior resignation.

Not long after, the Convention with Spain arrived and of course every

¹ See the note above, p. 711.

progress in the intended operations was stopped.—Not hearing from you three months after, I applied for an interview, wishing to settle my affairs in any mode whatsoever, you answered me by your Secretary Mr. Smith, that you should wish to know, and have delivered in writing, which were my future views.—I presented them and my Terms the next day in a note dated the 28th January 1791, in which I stated “That my views now and allways were to promote the hapiness and liberty of my own Country (South America) excessively oppressed and in so doing to offer also great Commercial advantages to Great Britain. . . . That upon these principles I should be very hapy to offer, and continue my services to England. . . . That my personal situation required, I should mention a competent annual suport till I could [come in] to the possession of my property in Caracas, wher I would pay any sums of money that might be granted to me on any account whatsoever. . . . That the intention being purely Patriotic with the wishes only of producing services to my Country, and promoting the interest and advantages of Great-britain as perfectly compatible ;—services ought not to be requested from me against Spain, with any other motive ; being a point of delicacy with me, tho’ authorized by the right of nations, and the example of many great and virtuous men, in modern and antient times etc.

To this note I received no answer ; till the month of May last that you favoured me with an audience—in which you told me, that you had read and considered my Note, and was pleased to make some apology for the retard of my Affairs, being convinced I deserved well from this country, and had just Claims ; that the Roman Catholic Religion was an obstacle for holding employment but that you could not yet speak to me deffinitely, and desired me to wait three or four weeks more ; in which term, you should be able certainly to decide everything upon the subject.—I remonstrated to you, the length of time I had been waiting for this answer, the uncertainty I was under of any permanent settlement yet agreeable with my wishes :—the generous and magnanimous offers her Majesty the Empress of Russia¹ had made to me when I visited her Court in the year 1787 (and under whose protection I was at that very moment, by her gracious orders in a Circular and most honorific Letter to her Ambassadors and Ministers in Europe) which magnanimity was the only resource left to me now, if this country contrary to my well grounded expectations, should not take proper care of me, as I had the honor to explain it to you in our former conversations, when on Request I stated to you the sum which her I. Majesty was disposed to settle upon me in Russia viz 1000 Louis d’or per an : —and so I conceived to be highly imprudent in me to defer a moment my departure to Petersbourg, if I could not depend upon a certainty here, on my proposed terms.—You desired me notwithstanding to wait that period, giving me your *Word of honour* that I should not be disapointed any farther ; and that you would send me directly 1000 £.s to pay my previously incurred expenses.

¹ See Antepara, and AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW, VI, 510.

In about three months after, I received an official message from you by the Secretary Mr. Smith (July the 10th) sending me 500 £ and a *promise* to conclude certainly *in a very few days all my other future arrangements*.—With this formal *decision*, that, I *must* consider as an acceptance of my proposed Terms, I gave up my intended Voyage, to Petersbrough, and wrote to my friends in consequence. If I have troubled you since, wishing for the final formal settlement soon, which as you was pleased to say, would have taken place in a few days, it is because the delays I had experienced before made me uneasy—and I am sure, you will not be surprised at it, considering I am a foreigner here, and placed in adventitious circumstances.

As your Secretary Mr. Smith is going abroad, and you, Sir, as I understand to Weymouth, I propose myself, for relaxation, to take a tour to Scotland and Ireland, and to be back in December next, relying entirely upon your kindness, honour and liberality for my future settlement, in a manner agreeable to me; and that the sum of 1200 £s per an. (that I wish should be advanced to me as a *loan* on the terms mentioned above) should not be deemed an excessive competency, for a foreign gentleman to live *in this Country*; and if in the course of few days (I may suppose 6) I receive no answer to this Letter I shall consider your silence as a tacit confirmation of the above, and as an approbation of my journey.—I take the liberty to mention to you *Mr. Turnbull* of Devonshire Square, a particular friend of mine, by whom any of your orders may be conveyed to me with safety and dispatch, as I shall constantly write to him:—and he shall be a proper person also to receive (as soon as convenient) the 500 £ reste of the mentioned sum I was to have received or any other advanced income; being, for want of it incommoded, especially to defray the expenses of my intended Journey.¹

I hope you will excuse this unavoidable trouble—and be convinced of my warmest wishes for the prosperity of England, whose glory I expect to see increased yet, by the executions of my proposed Plans:—and even before that period arrives, I flatter myself that I may have opportunities to prove my sincere attachment to this Country

I have the honour to be, with the greatest respect and regard Sir,
Your most obed^t. and most hum^l. Servant

FRANCISCO DE MIRANDA

LONDON Jermyn Str. 2. 47

September 8. 1791

The Right Hon^l. William Pitt.

¹ On September 7, 1792 Pitt informed Grenville: "The 800 £ about which you enquire was for Miranda and Smith has his receipt. . . ." Fortescue Papers, II, *British Historical MSS. Com., Report*, V, p. 310

III. SIR ARTHUR CAMPBELL TO WILLIAM PITT.¹

Upper Harley Street 28th Oct. 1790

Dear Sir

Major Blomhart has not yet arrived from Guernsey but in the course of my looking out for others who would give me information regarding the present State of New Orleans I was fortunate enough to fall in with one Winfrees a Captain in Blomhart's corps, who served with him in all his difficulties and ill treatment under the Spaniard last War. Winfrees lives in one of the Bahama Islands and has had late letters from his friends in the Neighbourhood of New Orleans informing him of their dislike to the Spaniards, and that, if it was to be a Spanish War and that they would have two or three British Ships of War stationed in the Mouth of the Mississippi, they would undertake not only to make themselves Masters of New Orleans but to sweep the whole Spaniards in that quarter to the Rivers mouth.

I have desired Winfrees to let me know the name of those he had a Dependance upon for raising men and the Numbers each would raise on any Sudden emergency if wanted; and hope to have it in my power to acquaint you of it in the course of a couple of days at furthest. I put it on the footing of bringing their names early in view for commissions in case there should be a War with Spain which was still very Doubtful.

I think it my duty to lay before you a Memorandum on the Subject of marching troops from New Orleans to Mexico, an Idea which does not appear to me safe, nor in any degree promising success at this hour.

I have the honour to be, with great respect,

Dear Sir,

Yours Most Faith^l

The Right Hon^{ble}

William Pitt &c &c &c

humble Servant

ARCH^d CAMPBELL

¹Chatham MSS. Bdle. 120. In the Chatham MSS., Bdle. 345, is a long memorandum unsigned, dated November 26, 1803, from some officer to Pitt. It begins by referring to the situation in 1790 and states that if war had then broken out an expedition would have been sent to Spanish America, one part under command of Sir Archibald Campbell, and the other of the writer, who was consulted by Campbell. There was to be co-operation from India. The writer refers to the projects and influence of General Miranda, who is well known to him as also his plans. Alexander Hamilton warned Lord Dorchester's agent, Beckwith, in the summer of 1790 that the United States looked forward to the possession of New Orleans. *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1890, pp. xxxviii, 149, 161-165; Hamilton, *Works* (1885), IV. 5, 32, 66. Scott, a member of the House of Representatives from Pennsylvania, suggested to Beckwith that England should take New Orleans, aided by operations on the upper Mississippi by American troops under General Knox, "and, this effected, to conduct an Army to be formed in the Western Country by land from thence into Spanish America." *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1890, p. 147; compare the documents on Bowles and the Floridas. Popham's outline of Miranda's career given in AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW, VI. 509, alleges that shortly after the American Revolution, before going to Europe, Miranda received assurances from Washington, Knox and Hamilton, that New England troops should assist him if Great Britain gave aid with her navy. It is probable that Popham's statement is an error, but the later connection between Miranda and Hamilton is well known. On Jefferson's attitude at this time see the introduction to these documents.

IV. MEMORANDUM

*Enclosure*October 28th 1790

Upon an examination of the distance from New Orleans to the Town of Mexico by the shortest Route according to Mensuration taken upon several different Maps I find it is not less than Twelve hundred English Miles.

On the supposition that there was a tolerable good road along this Tract, and that an Army even without Artillery were to march continually at the rate of fifteen miles per day, it could only be accomplished in the space of Eleven weeks or Seventy Seven days. If to this circumstance is added the number of horses, mules or bullocks necessary to carry tents baggage, provisions, Stores, Medicines and Ammunition, for such an Army, it may be readily conceived that the difficulties to be surmounted in the execution of a march of this nature will be much greater than is at present attended to, even if it was certain that the natives of those Countries through which the Troops were to pass, were in a State of friendship with us. But as that is not the case, and as the Districts through which the Troops must pass, have not yet been explored by any person on whom a confidence can be placed, I should think from all the information I can at present collect, either from Maps or from Men who have been in North America that the march of an Army from New Orleans to Mexico through Savannas and Forrests so little known to us may be attended with the most fatal consequences at this Juncture.

A. C.

[*Bowles and the Floridas.*]V. OCCURRENCES FROM 5TH JULY TO 3D AUGUST 1790.¹

McGillevery the Indian Chief of Several of the Southern Tribes of Indians arrived here the 24th Ulto accompanied by Twenty Nine Kings Chiefs and head Men of different Nations to fix on the Boundaries between them and the United States, they are much caressed and great attention is paid to them when any treaty is formed. Your Agent in Canada shall have timely notice that he may order Goods out accordingly, or remove where he thinks it may be most for the Interest of the concerned. . . .

Your favour of the 3d June I have safe, in Answer thereto, we are to poor to partake of your Offer nor is it a time *for them* to enter into disputes with foreign Powers, having almost as much to do as the French National Assembly: We are far from being a Settled Nation at present the Southern Members forming one of ² the Northern Members, another party in both Houses, their chief aim is selling ³ the Individual States debts to be paid by the Union, a mere flea bite but yet it has occupied their Attention for Months and created great ill will amongst them.

¹ F. O. America H. Information by the secret agent who gives his name as R. D. in the despatches, and as P. Allaire, in his private communications to the English ministers; he writes from New York.

² And?

³ Settling?

But with your permission I will inform you what I think may be done with certainty.

From 5 to 7000 Men may be had from the Western Country that would assist any Nation to take the Floridas from the Spaniards on Condition they¹ the Western Territory should have a free Navigation of the Mississippi, it is now in your power (If a War with Spain is Actually begun tho by Recent Accounts they have ask^d. Pardon) to bind us in Adamantine Chains of Friendship and Alliance with you—take the Floridas Open a free Navigation of the Mississippi for the Western Inhabitants, and you bind that Country and its Inhabitants for Ever in spite of Congress, or all the world, for without the Mississippi, its fruitfulness is useless, a few frigates and 2000 men would retake it in three Weeks and if proper means were made use of I would engage for a sufficient Number to Assist, those People are not as yet subject to the Laws of the Union, they are at present a large body of People, governed by local Laws of their own forming and propose being part of the Union on certain Conditions, as a proof of which, they undertake Expeditions against the Indians, destroy them and add their Lands to their possessions, they have drove away two Spanish posts of 30 and 25 Men and I [?] have demanded² and obtained a free Navigation for their produce, this has been done contrary to the Express Order of Congress, if therefore proper mode is made use of, which I will communicate. If you order it nothing so Easily done as your Regaining the Floridas, your Answr. to this, must be in the Mercantile Stile, which I shall fully comprehend.³ A due consideration of the Above may lead to matters of the greatest Importance to both Parties, for they are Men desperate in principal and fortune, and would almost undertake impossibilities to acquire a few thousand Spanish Dollars.

You may rest assured nothing can be done with this Government at present. No offer would tempt them at present to Enter into a War, nor is the Animosity of the leading Men yet so entirely forgot against the English as to induce them to join in a War with them We are a Strange Nation, English principals and Roman Ideas, every Man of £100 a year is a Souverain Prince every Mechanick a Man of an Independent principal there is no distinction amongst us today. Speaker of the Assembly or President of the Senate tomorrow the same Men, one a Carpenter, the other a Grocer, thus we jog on.

VI. OCCURRENCES FROM 6 AUGUST TO 1 SEPTEMBER, 1790.

Your last letters of April and May came safe to hand and have been carefull perused Read and digested and the following is my Opinion founded on Experience, knowledge and Acquaintance with those they may be concerned. Should a War breake out between you and S[pain]

¹ That.

² Possibly an error of the copyist. The *I* is apparently superfluous.

³ Note the light cast on the next correspondence "in the mercantile stile."

and you are willing to Reposses your Southern Farms,¹ I am confident you may easily Recover them with 2000 (Pounds) Men and a few Men of War, by timely notice you may rest assured that an Equal Number from the Western Territory will join you, not by order, consent or Approbation, of the United States, but by those who Acknowledge Allegiance to NONE. Men, hardy, inured to fitigue and danger, expert Marks-men who live by hunting and who have for these last five Years lived Constantly in the Western Woods and who are as constantly attacking and Attackd. by the Indians, these Men in my opinion (*for the purpose*) are equal to any 5000 sent from Europe: they want the free Navigation of the River, they want the lands along the River and Above all they Want Employ being most of them destitute of Clothes and Money and the Major part of them were Soldiers during the War against England, Many of the best officers in the American Army have retired there and would prefer *Employment* to farming where every Requisite is wanting; besides the Acquisition of so many Subjects for Rest Assured a few leading Characters Excepted you are the favourites and it would go hard to raise an Army against you—the above you may fully rely on—on proper means being first put in practice but in must be confided but to few. I am confident that not above three can keep A Secret and Sir John your Consul must not be One, *the Means* are Money and fair Promises such as you intend to perform and keep after the work is done.

N. B. When you honor me with an Answer put 2000 Pounds for 2000 Men. Farms, Florida, the Rest I undoubtedly shall fully comprehend.² One British Officer with me will be Sufficient to carry any such Scheme into Execution.

VII. GEORGE BECKWITH TO W. W. GRENVILLE.³

NEW YORK August 5th 1790

Sir

In conformity to Lord Dorchester's secret instructions dated the 27th June I esteem it my duty to transmit the several inclosures hereunto annexed.

1. No 1 contains communications made to me by the gentleman high in office,⁴ with whom I am in the regular habit of intercourse, on which subjects nothing new has occurred.

¹ Sir George Yonge wrote to Mr. Aust, Feb. 16, 1791, relative to this secret agent, P. Allaire (R. D.), asking Mr. Aust to consult Mr. Pitt on the subject, "more especially as Mr. Pitt lately expressed himself satisfied with the Correspondence, and directed encouragement to be given for information relative to what He calls *Southern Farms* the meaning which is understood and He wishes for positive Instructions whether to put a final End to any Correspondence on the subject or not." See the next letter: "*Southern Farms*" means the Floridas.

² By this he means that "pounds" shall signify "men", and "farms", "Florida."

³ F. O. America L. Grenville was then Secretary of the State for the Home Department.

⁴ Alexander Hamilton?

2 No 2 is the general estimate of the annual disbursements of the government in consequence of the recent assumption of the State debts, and which as it respects the Ways and Means will be debated at the House of . . . Representatives tomorrow.

3 No 3 is a letter addressed to Mr Nepean which has been put into my hands by a person of the name of Dalton,¹ who declares himself to be a Lieutenant on the half pay list, in His Majesty's provincial service, this gentleman from his own account was sent last summer by the Creek Indians to London on the concerns of their nation and of other neighbouring tribes, and in consequence (as he asserts) had access to the King's Ministers in the present critical situation of affairs I thought it prudent to receive this letter, and to use general expressions of friendship towards these Indians, who border on the Spanish Provinces, avowing at the same time that I had no authority to treat with them (which they solicited by Mr. Dalton's accounts) and declaring that we were at peace with the United States.

Colonel Macgillivray who is the principal leader of the . . . Creeks is still here negotiating,² and nothing has yet transpired, I acknowledge I entertain some doubts whether this gentleman and Mr Dalton are perfectly cordial, but hitherto I have not been able to ascertain it.

The Spanish Resident presented a letter from Spain to The President on the 3rd Instant which came from Falmouth by the June packet.

I have the honor to be with the highest respect

Sir,

Your most obedient and most humble Servant

GEO. BECKWITH.

NO. 1 "Extract"

NEW YORK July 15th 1790

I have communicated to the President the subjects on which we have conversed, and feel warranted to assure you that there is the most sincere good disposition on the part of the Government here to go into the consideration of all matters unsettled between Great Britain and us, in order to effect a perfect understanding between the two Countries, and to lay the foundation for future amity, this—particularly, as it respects commercial objects we view as conducive to our interests.

In the present stage of this business, it is difficult to say much on the subject of a treaty of Alliance, your rupture with Spain (if it shall take place) opens a very wide political field; thus much I can say, we are perfectly unconnected with Spain, have even some points unadjusted with that Court, and are prepared to go into the consideration of the question. The speeches or declarations of any persons whatever in the Indian Country or to the Westward suggesting hostile ideas respecting

¹On Dalton's relations to McGillivray, see *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1890, pp. 153, 155, giving the latter's opinion of Bowles and Dalton. Evan Nepean was Under Secretary of State for the Home Department until 1789 or 1790.

²See *Report on Canadian Archives* as above, and *American State Papers, Ind. Aff.*, I. Pickett's *Alabama* gives an account of McGillivray based on documents in part.

the Forts, are not authorised by this Government Lord Dorchester's conduct with respect to the Indians is held by us to be a strong proof of his Lordship's dispositions to promote harmony and friendship.

VIII. THOMAS DALTON TO EVAN NEPEAN.¹

NEW YORK 3rd August 1790

Sir

I am sorry to inform you the answer of his Majesty's Minister on the 24th of June '89 is by no means acceptable to my friends in the Creek Nation. It gives them reason to suggest that they are totally *deserted* by your *standard*. However, Sir, I as a British Subject beg you may reconsider the last business. I communicated to you on the part of the Creeks Fearing the consequence that may hereafter follow I have communicated my sentiments to Major Beckwith Aid de Camp to Lord Dorchester, who does me the honour to transmit this letter to you, and leave him to explain my wish that you, write me, to Lord Dorchester, as through any other channel I cannot receive it with safety to myself and the interest of your Nation. As my Situation is delicate I submit to the information of my friends on the business and beg leave to Solicit the Honour of your answer by the first Packet

I have the Honour to be, Sir, Your Most Ob! Hum! Serv^t

THOS. DALTON

IX. GEORGE MILLER TO THE DUKE OF LEEDS.²

CHARLESTON September 3d. 1790

My Lord Duke

I have this day had the honour to receive your Grace's dispatch dated the 7th of May via New York, covering His Majesty's most gracious Message to both Houses of Parliament, communicating intelligence of the capture of some British Vessels by the Spaniards on the North Western Coasts of America and the very Affectionate and loyal Addresses to His Majesty in answer thereto

The possibility that hostilities might soon commence between Great Britain and Spain, having some weeks ago reached this place through the public papers, it instantly became my duty to make every enquiry in my power with respect to such parts of the Dominions of Spain as are at no great distance from hence.

The intelligence I have hitherto received is entirely confined to East Florida where a new Governour had lately arrived from Havannah in the room of Don Manuel De Lespedes; that the Garrison was augmented only in a small degree and that though the rumour of a war had reached that place, nothing had been done to put the fortifications in a state of defense. By an account I have more recently received, but on which I

¹ No. 3 in Beckwith's letter above.

² F. O. America H, No. 26. The Duke of Leeds was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. George Miller was the English consul at Charleston.

cannot rely with the same confidence as on the other, it is said the new Governour had called in the outposts from the River St John, in order to secure the Citadel at St Augustine from any slight attack. The small number of Military at present in the Province precluding all hopes of resisting one of a more serious nature.

Situated as I am, and liable to imposition from the peculiar interests of men from whom I must derive what information I get, I am fully aware how cautious I ought to be in every intelligence I ought to convey to your Grace. I must therefore beseech that what I now send may be received as the most authentic I could at this time obtain, the more especially if in the event of a war any stroke should be meditated against the Province of East Florida.

But whatever the defenceless state of that Province may be, I must entreat your Grace to pardon the presumption of expressing my hopes that if a rupture has taken place between the Courts of London and Madrid, East Florida may not be considered of sufficient consequence to be attacked.

The fidelity I owe to my Sovereign and my zeal for the Glory of His Crown and the interests of His People call upon me to assign my reasons for these hopes.

The Provinces of East and West Florida in the possession of Spain are looked on with a very jealous eye by the people of these States the first holding out strong allurements to the Slaves in Georgia and Carolina even, to quit their masters and on their reaching St Augustine they meet with an asylum under the specious pretext of regard for their Souls. The free navigation of the river Mississippi guaranteed by the Treaty of Peace to the Citizens of America, has been in some instances obstructed, which has been ground of great uneasiness to them, and unless the present rupture with Spain produces an alteration in her Councils, will, in my opinion be entirely stopped by that Court, if ever attempted to be carried into effect by the Americans. The differences of advantages attending these two Provinces is immense. The former almost without inhabitants, except at two or three small posts; without soil to raise more than the bare necessities of life even were it more fully settled and without having national support to make exertions must render it a poor acquisition to any power. The latter, rich in soil, already tolerably populous on the banks of its various rivers and capable of becoming infinitely more so, might make it an object of greater importance. However, on this I do not presume to give an opinion.

The inference I would humbly beg leave to draw from this account of these two Provinces, the possession of which I do not believe would be to the permanent interest of Great Britain, is that the people of America do not, I have reason to think consider themselves under any obligation to Spain for the part she took in the late War but that it was entirely dictated by the contracts subsisting between her and France, therefore as it is possible the present convulsions there may dissolve the compact of the House of Bourbon and the Government of France may

adopt a different scheme of policy, the United States, this cause of contention remaining in the hands of Spain may in all probability find it their best interest to seize some favourable moment to second the views of Great Britain against a neighbour who has rendered herself very obnoxious to them. How far such a Junction might be good policy it is not for me to determine.

I must again solicit your Grace's pardon for what I have here offered for consideration. The principle upon which I have done it will, I trust excuse me however, its policy may be condemned. The manner in which these hints have been made requires every apology on my part, but a ship being on the point of sailing when your Grace's dispatch reached me I had not time to reduce them to better form.

Any information I may, from the most diligent attention to the subject, be enabled to communicate shall be forwarded to your Grace by every conveyance that offers

I have had the honour to reply on the 17th of July to Mr. Aust's letter of the 5th of May, duplicate of which I also received this day

With the utmost Deference and Respect, I have the honour to be
My Lord Duke

Your Grace's most humble and most obedient Servant,
GEO. MILLER.

X. OCCURRENCES FROM 6TH OCTOBER TO 4 NOVEMBER, 1790¹

The President of the United States has made Treaties with all the Indian Tribes both to the Northward and Southward and yet they daily commit murders, and in so open a manner that the People of Kentucky and the Western Territory have just now made an Invasion into the Northern Indian Country with two thousand Volunteers who are determined not to give or take quarters, this is only a small Specimen of the Obedience of those People to the United States, and their determined manner of Acting in every Respect the most conclusive to their Interest. We are pushing the Nootka Sound Trade all in our Power two from Boston three from Philadelphia and two from this port have sailed this fall for that port as you have in some manner almost entirely annihilated our trade to the West Indies we must push it some where. had we a Capital you would find us strongly opposing you in the China Trade, for every Dollar that can be got, goes there for Teas, Nankeens China and our Teas now sell 20 pC Cheaper than your best India Sales and I make no doubt in a few years we shall send Teas to Ireland for their Linnens, as for our Manufactories, they are in their Infancy and not Capable of furnishing one thousand part of our consumption. I went on purpose to Hartford (Connecticut) and into Boston State to examine into the Wollen and Sail Cloth Manufactory, it is a very humble beginning (the Wollen) their Capital about one thousand Sterling and the proprietors informed me, If Connecticut State did not Assist them with the lend of

¹ Chatham MSS. Bdle. 343. Evidently sent to Pitt.

Two or Three Thousand pounds that they must give it up, as Individuals would not advance, the Sail Cloth Manufactory is not in a much better Situation, the only Manufactory that can hurt You at present is Nails and Leather Nor can we (in my opinion) oppose you in any other branch for many years such as Woollen and Linnens of all Sorts, Cutlery etc., therefore any other information is Erronious.

The Commissioners Appointed by the States of New York and Vermont have fixed and determined the boundaries of Vermont on certain Conditions the chief are, that Vermont pay thirty Eight thousand Dollars to New York within the Year 1792 and that they come into the Confederation before the year 1794.

I have done myself the honor of fully Answering your *two Letters* and I am fully confirmed in my Assertions and Opinions by what I have since lernd and my own knowledge and Experience of that Country believe me it will turn out to you a Second India, nay more, for you will always command the Granary of America, you will please to think Seriously of this matter, and should there be a War by all means possess the Floridas, they are more Valuable than the mines of Peru & Mexico should that Affair take place, you will please to think of me as Collector of the Customs, or Secretary of the Colony. I am so fully convinced of its Consequence that I would Emigrate on the above Conditions, Canada can never be a Commercial Province as they only have five Months Navigation in the Year and that a very dangerous one Wheras the Mississippi is always Navigable and the Western People can at all times Raft down their Lumber and produce and their demands in a few years will be Equal to one half of the United States for British Goods, this is as clear as any Problem in Euclid, it is no vain Speculation no Idea of acquiring Appropriation unmerited, but what must be Absolutely the Case, let who will possess the Floridas. . . .¹

Should your Government Ever possess the Floridas the Emigration from this Country would exceed believe as there are many discontents amongst us, and New Orleans would in Seven Years be the largest City in America and the greatest Mart for Grain and Lumber.

I Remain with profound Respect. Sir

Your very Hum. Serv^t

November 4th 1790

R. D.

XI. OCCURRENCES FROM 15 DECEMBER, 1790, to 6TH JANUARY 1791.²

I had the honor in my last letter of —th December to state my meaning fully, also to have answered your favor of 7 October which I hope you have received.

I Request your house would consult some professional Man, with respect to the facility of coming and going from New Orleans, both to your Windward and Leeward Islands, they can go at all times, and their passages are equal nearly, that is about fourteen days, it is the Center to

¹ A digression on business matters follows.

² F. O. America, J.

all the West Indies and the only port on the Continent that is so equally situated the Utility and benefit that now Exists. I have had the honor to explain with respect to its future benefit you are more Competent to judge than I am, but the Imports and Exports from New Orleans in Seven Years, were you possessed of it would (in my opinion) exceed any state in the Union by the Rapid Increase of the Western Territory and Emigration to Florida.

With Respect to Aid I am fully convinced they would give it to you on the conditions already mentioned, at least from every information and knowledge I have and can get, but you will please to observe, I do not hold myself accountable for the Absolute performance, they are *Swiss* and must be used accordingly, it is not out of love or friendship they Assist but Necessity (for want of Cash) compells them and your greatest Enemies were they to offer more and better terms would procure them, Circumstance worthy your most serious Condition, but by all means let me conjure you not to trust to many, Secrets of this importance should be instructed to but few. I also would prefer a Military Man to be sent in whom they may have more confidence than in me I will Assist him all in my power but let him be a very prudent One or he will be *too tall by a head* as those Western Lads have very Summary Laws.

Should you not coincide with my opinion S——[pai]n will hold your Islands at pleasure having the Havanah and Florida where their Navy lays Secure from the haricanes and where all your leeward fleets must past and where they have every Necessary for forming a Navy. Naval Stores from Carolina and Hemp from the Ohio, they now carry produce to New Orleans upwards of Two thousand three hundred Miles of¹ this Country is not superiour to Mexico to you, I am a very Ignorant man, the Immense quantities of clothing that this Country must want in a few years would be of the Utmost Importance to your Revenue.

The Windward Islands can go and come by the Windward passage the Leward Islands by the Gulf none will ex[tend] (in general) above fourteen days your house will be surprised that they never saw its Consequences but once point out will be sufficient

Twenty years possession of this Country you would want nothing from Russia, your own Colonies would not only supply you with Iron, Hemp and Naval Stores, but you would supply other Kingdoms with those Articles and Grain you would possess the Granary and Arsenal of America and hold all the West Indies, French, Dutch, Spanish and Danes at your disposal by having an Immediate access to them at all times and in so short a space of time they may be conquered and reconquered before any Acco^l. can be sent to Europe and Succours sent them.

It would be prudent in my opinion to try what Aid could be acquired before a Person is sent, I know no other method than that which I have already stated by Employing a few leading and popular Men amongst them, as for Strangers going and proposing the Question, he would never succeed and ten to one would but lose his life they must

¹ If.

first pave the way and get adherents, when ready formed, a Person from your House as *director in the Manufactory* would be absolutely Necessary. I think I have fully Explained every particular and as you can do nothing before May if your house think proper to make the Experiment your Answer to mine of the 1 December and this will be time enough to put things in a proper train and the end of the journey to Kentuck. I refer you for the particulars of the plan as the most prudent, frugal, and Elligible. [R. D.]

XII. EXTRACT "R. D." TO SIR G. YONGE 20TH JANUARY, 1791.¹

Your favor of the 30 November came to hand the 17th Inst. and have duly considered the same. I should have obeyed your orders of the 4th of said Month with punctuallity in regard to your Southern Farms and am convinced I could have assisted you in selling them having had the promise of Two very Substantial and *Capital Farmers*.

You will be pleased to inform me by first opportunity wether the Agency for this Country is Also discontinued as well as that for Canada and wether I am not to be allowed my former Sum of £200 per [?] Annum to keep Affairs in such a Situation, that should you want to settle your *Southern Farms*, it may be done with lapidition² on the Terms I had the honor of writing you the 6th December and 5 January last as well as to inform you the Real State of your Creditors here

XIII. WM. A. BOWLES TO LORD GRENVILLE.³

My Lord

I have the honor of enclosing to your Lordship A paper, which is addressed to his Majesty, and which I trust I shall be permitted to deliver to him in person, if there is no objection to any part of its contents or to such a manner of delivery.

On both these points I submit myself to the Judgment of his Majesty's Ministers and More especially of your Lordship.

This paper contains enough to express the wishes of the Nation, under the present circumstances; But the connection which it is wished to form with Great Britain, goes to objects of a more extensive nature and such, as would not be proper to be opened in the address to his Majesty.

These, I have reserved for a private letter, which I will take the liberty of writing to your Lordship and your Lordship will Judge whether they are such as will deserve the Attention of Great Britain, or not.

I have the honor to be,

My Lord

Your Lordships Most Obedient Servant

Osburns Hotel

WM. A. BOWLES.

Jany. 3d. 1791

¹ F. O. America I. See above page 718, 719.

² Expedition (?)

³ F. O. America L.

The Representation of Wm. Augustus Bowles in behalf of himself
and

Unatoy
Kuahtekiske
Sepouejah
Tuskeniah
Wopio

Deputed from the United Nation of Creeks and Cherokees

To His Britannic Majesty

May it Please your Majesty

In conjunction with the persons whose names are above mentioned, I have the honour to address your Majesty, as Representatives from the United Nation of Creeks and Cherokees: Who, united to your Majesty by the obligation of former Treaties but much more by the ties of attachment to the British Name, and Character, which no change of circumstances has been able to obliterate from their Minds, have commissioned us to seek the presence of your Majesty, through the dangers and hazards of a long journey by land and by water, And, to explain in the fullest manner, their present situation, their old alliance with the British Nation, what they have borne, and what they have forborne, to preserve inviolate their faith and attachment etc etc etc

Having discharged my duty towards the United Nation by conveying their Humble Address and representation to your Majesty; It may be expected that I should say somewhat of myself, who, being one of your Majesty's subjects and upon the list of your half pay officers, ought to give some reason for appearing before your Majesty in my present character.

Not to detain your Majesty with much upon a subject so insignificant as myself. It is enough perhaps to say, that I was an Ensign in one of your Majesty's Provincial Corps at New York in the year 1778 and went with the Corps to West Florida where they arrived in the beginning of the year 1779, that I was struck by the Commanding Officer from the list of your Majesty's Officers without the benefit of a Court Martial, the form of a resignation or any one reason assigned. Thus reduced, by a stretch of power, never paralleled in your Majesty's Service, in a strange country, without any means of support only about fourteen years of age, I owed my preservation to the generosity of a Chief of the Creek Nation, who succored me in his family. I took the Indian Dress, soon habituated myself to their Manners, and became at length, from custom, and from choice attached to the Nation to which I was otherwise bound by the ties of gratitude.

When your Majesty's Commander in West Florida, Genl Campbell in the year 1781 sent to the Creek Country for Warriors to join the British troops, to act against the Spaniards, I came among those, that were sent, and served as an Indian, during the whole time the British troops continued in that Country, when the place was about being surrendered to Spain, it was proposed to me by Genl Campbell that I should join the corps to which I had once belonged, and I accordingly accepted

a Commission, which I held till September 1783; when, finding your Majesty had no immediate call for my service and previous to the evacuation of New York I obtained leave of absence from Lord Dorchester, and, led by the attachment which was still warm in my breast I returned to the country of the Creeks, with whom I have lived ever since.

What relates to myself while I served with your Majesty's officers, is neither becoming, nor necessary for me to relate; As to that part of my life which has been spent among the people, who are so little known in this Country, I may venture to say this much for myself; that I hope a British subject is discharging the character, we all aim at, if he is endeavouring to do good in any part of the Globe, that among the people, where I am settled, I have always made this my endeavour, and not to speak proudly, I believe I have done much to promote their happiness, both in their private life and in their National concerns But of this I am sure, and in speaking of it I shall not fear to speak proudly, That I have always preserved my Allegiance to your Majesty and my affection to this Country, that I have risked my life and wasted my property to maintain both; and that in all circumstances I will endeavour to advance the interest of G. Britain.

Waiving all other proofs which I could produce, if necessary of these declarations, I trust them upon the credit of what is now in your Majesty's presence. Your Majesty sees one of your subjects becoming the adviser and the leader of an independent and populous Nation, presenting to your Majesty their devotion and services as Allies, both in peace and War; and under circumstances highly advantageous to the Commerce and Interest of Great Britain. It rarely happens to a subject to produce such evidence of his attachment to the Interest of his Country.

That your Majesty may in all parts of your dominions have subjects, who, with less opportunity, may have the same sincerity and zeal to serve their Country as I have, is the fervent prayer, of your Majesty's

Most true and faithful Subject and Servant

WM. A. BOWLES.

XIV. WM. A. BOWLES TO LORD GRENVILLE.¹

My Lord

I now trouble your Lordship with those points which I mentioned in my letter, as not necessary to be stated in the Address to his Majesty but which are eventually highly deserving, in my judgment the consideration of his Majesty's Ministers. When I go the length of opening my designs to your Lordship, it is not so much upon the confidence, merely of that secrecy which belongs to every person in your Lordship's Station, as from the particular opinion, I have been taught to entertain of Your Lordship's character, and which assures me, I am safe in communicating what other wise should not be known till executed.

Your Lordship knows, that I have applied to the Court of Spain for their acquiescing in our having two ports on the coast of Florida. By the

¹ F. O. America, I.

silence hitherto held on that subject, I believe, the Spanish Government do not mean to accede to my demand. If that is not acceded to, by the time I arrive in Florida, I shall immediately attack the Spanish Forts which are few and weak, and I calculate that in the space of two Months at furthest I shall have driven the Spaniards from the whole country of the Florida's And that of New Orleans And that the lower part of Louisiana and both the Floridas will belong completely to the Creek and Cherrokee Nation.

As this will no doubt bring upon us a descent from the Havannah, I shall immediately upon the Spaniards evacuating, March a strong force across the Mississippi towards Mexico, not only with a view of carrying the war from home, but to avail Myself of the state I know mens minds are in, all over the country

It is not long since I marched seven hundred miles in that country, for the purpose partly of exercising troops, that I had been training in a New Method, and partly to try what influence such a movement might have. This expedition answered both my views. The numberless addresses, I received in writing from all parts, satisfied me that I might have proceeded to the centre of Mexico and had been received as a deliverer. But the affairs of our Nation were not then ripe, according to my judgment for the experiment.

Relying upon these facts, I should as soon as the Floridas, and the lower part of Louisiana were mastered, immediately march at the head of a strong force towards Mexico. If during the progress of this force, I found it likely I should succeed in that country so well as I am led to believe I should, I would proceed without delay to Mexico, and in conjunction with the Natives declare it independent of the Spaniards. In such event I should have no fears about the state of things in the Floridas.

But should it appear to me not so adviseable to proceed to the capital of Mexico, I judge that the alarm created by My force hovering on the borders of it would be such, as to enable me to make my terms for the Floridas ; and that in such event, the Spaniards would be content to yield the Floridas to the Creeks and Cherrokees.

I will not mispend your Lordship's time in reasoning upon a subject that is already sufficiently understood. The advantages of a free trade with the Spanish Colonies are well understood in this Country—But I will venture to say the means of attaining it are not so easily seen—I believe, if Britain attains it, she will attain it in some such mode as I now mention and then she will save herself the repedition of such Tragedies as were acted at Porto Bello and Carthagera, And which will ever end, as those attempts did. It was the opinion of Lord Clive, that by the Troops of the Country, only, India was to be conquered and retained. Experience has shewn he was right ; and it may be worth consideration, if the Maxim is not as good in America as in Indostin.

I should inform your Lordship that these Speculations would meet with other support than the force of the Creek and Cherrokee Nation. There are now settled in the Cumberland Country, as set of men, who

are the Relicts of the American Army ; These people are weary of their Situation and their inactive life, and are ready for any thing that will put them in Motion.

I have had a request from these people to prevail on the Council to admit them into our Country And to lead them on an expedition to the Spanish settlements, that being the object of adventure now most thought of, in that part of the world. From these people I think I could receive, at least six thousand effective men.

These people are desirous on any terms, of coming to settle amongst us, as well for the objects of peace as those of War. For, at present, they are shut out from the sea. They feel no attachment to the Americans and would be glad to abandon everything for a situation near the Sea in our Country.

In discovering these designs to your Lordship, I mean merely to lay before his Majesty's Ministers the situation, the designs, and wishes, of the Nation, in all openness and sincerity.

To return to the principal point which is the subject of the address to His Majesty and which is one great object of our Embassy—The admission to the free Ports—I do trust this is so reasonable on our part and so advantageous to Great Britain, that it will be conceded in some mode or other. Either by an Act of Parliament, if necessary, or by a direction to the Governor and the Collector of the Customs at Nassau in New Providence and elsewhere, if the interpretation of the statute can be made in our favour, Or in some Mode that may seem best to the Kings Ministers.

If we are successful in this point—The Creek and Cherrokee Nation can work their way in spite of Spaniards and Americans, and May before many years are past, confer on Great Britan in return a line of free trade which she never before enjoyed, nor could attain, in my humble opinion, but by their interposition.

As I am opening my mind with great plainness I will endeavour to make his Majesty's Ministers easy upon another point—It may be there is some awkwardness with regard to the Spanish Court, in our being received here ; Political reasons, or etiquette, be it what it may.

In a few words I came here to serve the Creek and Cherrokee Nation and to serve G. Britain—To attain this end I am content to waive everything, that does not necessarily produce that end—The substance not the circumstance is my aim—If a whisper across the Atlantic can procure our Vessels admission to the free Ports, our purpose, thus far will be as completely answered, as if it was effected by an Act of Parliament, And of the business of the Treaty could be transacted without my presenting the Medal to his Majesty and receiving another from him, I should think myself warranted in disobeying the orders of the Council. Should this mode of transacting it be more agreeable to his Majesty's Ministers—Rather [than] raise the jealousies and suspicions of the Spanish Court I would waive in behalf of the Chiefs and myself any open marks of distinction—I am ready to yield all such points, If I can depart from hence,

with a firm assurance that a good understanding is established with G. Britain, that the treaty now renewed is not the less sincere for being secret, that a correspondence will be kept up, and that our vessels will always be admitted into the free ports of the West Indies, or at least into that part of Nassau.

What I have hitherto urged to your Lordship, has been upon topics purely Commercial and such as appear to me to interest Great Britain, as well as the Nation of Creeks and Cherrokees. There are other considerations with regard the interest of G. Britain alone.

The late peace with the Americans by putting an end to hostilities cannot, I should think have removed all cause of suspicion and jealousy between the two Countries. That it has not on the side of the Americans your Lordship will collect from the following facts.

In the Month of April 1788 a proposal was secretly made to me from the Americans, to join with them to bring about a Treaty of Alliance offensive and defensive, and to lead the Indians on an attack upon the Northern tribes, and the British Posts. This was refused, but a communication like this not being safe, as they thought, in the breast of a person so hostile, as I had on that occasion declared myself, some method was to be devised to get rid of me ; And in the months of August and September following, several attempts were made to cut me off.

I mention this fact of their proposal to me, only amongst many others, that might be produced, to shew, the Americans are now waiting their opportunity to seize the remainder of the British Colonies, and that the first occasion will not be suffered to pass.

I do, therefore in behalf of Great Britain press most seriously upon your Lordship this consideration, Whether with such active enemies in the neighbourhood of the British Colonies, it is not, I will not say wise, But absolutely necessary, for Great Britain to have some Alliance and connection to back her interest in those parts? And who, but the Nation of Creeks and Cherrokees present themselves, as proper for that Alliance? Great Britain can never find that support, she will want, among the Northern Indians, who are reduced in number, sunk in Spirit, and have little resource, but the poor cloathing, and other gratifications they receive from his Majesty's Governors.

And I may venture to say that such a general correspondence is now established between the Indians on the borders of Canada and the Creeks and Cherrokees that even the former, dependent as they may be supposed, will never again be brought to act, with full energy, unless the same cause is maintained by the advice and approbation of the Creeks and Cherrokees And this general confederacy now formed and gaining daily strength among all the Indian Nations, is a new posture of affairs on that Continent which is not yet known here, but which must be considered in every future speculation formed with regard to Indian politics.

The situation of the Creeks in the two Floridas seems peculiarly to fit them for being useful allies to Great Britain. They are in the neighbourhood of the West India Islands. They have the Americans on one

side and the Spaniards on the other, both Enemies to the Interest of Great Britain, that at present, nominally in peace with her. Upon a quarrel with either power who can be so useful as the Creeks? If the British Colonies are to be defended, who are so able to make a diversion as the Creeks, offensive or defensive,—they seem to be pointed out, by inspection of the Maps merely, as the Nation that Great Britain should cultivate.

In pressing this on your Lordship I speak the language of an Indifferent Spectator, or rather one biassed towards this Country. It has been the misfortune of this Country to be less knowing in her transactions with America, than in the rest of her politics. I trust she will not suffer the last card she has left to be played as the great game was

But to save that she must purchase friends, and that soon, or she will have again to fight for her colonies without an allie to support her; I speak tenderly when I say without an Allie, for suppose the present address of the Creek Nation should not be thought worthy of notice, and being thus rejected they should be left to adjust their affairs in the best Manner their domestic Interest suggests, suppose they should deem it wise to unite with their old enemies the Americans;

I can tell your Lordship what will be the first object of such new formed Alliance. It will be an attack upon the British posts in which they will I believe be joined by all the Northern Nations, if they adhere to the Union now subsisting among the Indian Nations.

What will then happen to Canada, and to the other possessions of G. Britain, your Lordship may well conjecture.—Such events may take place before many months are passed, should the wish of the Nation be disappointed in their present address to his Majesty, and it will be utterly out of my power, with all the attention they have hitherto shewn to my advice, to influence their Counsels on this subject. Then may be led when either their inclinations or their Interests are to be gratified, but when both are opposed, they will take some course, where one or the other leads them.

It will be my misfortune to view the effects of the storm I can no longer govern and I shall at last behold that catastrophe which I have employed so much labor in various stations to prevent or retard.

It is painful to me and perhaps ungracious to entertain your Lordship with such disastrous speculations but I meant to deal honestly and openly with his Majesty's Government and I thought myself bound to conceal no danger that could be guarded against if known, one main and only guard is now offered, and I promise myself the good fortune of this Country will suggest the wisdom the seize it.

Should it be thought proper by His Majesty's Ministers to add the former object of treaty which is wholly Commercial, this also, which is political and leads to the business of War, I shall then be obliged to call upon Government for Assistance in providing Arms and Military Stores, those being Articles which must for the present be supplied from this Country these may easily be supplied without the Government appearing

to have any share in the transaction. They are articles of Commerce, which I can obtain from any Merchant in London to be shipped for the port of Nassau. From which place they can be easily conveyed into the Creek Nation.

After detaining your Lordship so long, I will add only one word more, which is that I do rely on your Lordship's particular judgment and character for our business meeting with a due, and deliberate consideration. I have the honor to be

My Lord, Your Lordship's

Most obedient and very humble Servant,

WM. A. BOWLES.¹

ADELPHI Jany. 13, 1791

The Right Honorable Lord Grenville.

XV. WM. A. BOWLES TO LORD GRENVILLE.²

My Lord

Having communicated to your Lordship the letter I had written to El Conde de Florida Blanca respecting the demand of free ports I think it proper to submit to your Lordship the enclosed letter which is the first overture I make towards reviving that subject.

Your Lordship will, I hope perfectly understand that I make this communication with no view of entangling the Kings Ministers in any transactions between the Creek Nation and the Spanish Court. But that his Majesty's Ministers may know what I am doing in a matter, where Great Britain may be remotely concerned.

If your Lordship does not think this troublesome I shall continue to transmit what follows from it, between me and the Spanish Ambassador.

Your Lordship will have the goodness to send me back the letter

I have the Honor to be

My Lord, Your Lordships

Most obedient and very humble Servant

ADELPHI

WM. A. BOWLES

Jany. 25, 1791

Right Honorable Lord Grenville

¹ In the *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1890, p. xlii, Mr. Brymner notes that in the State Papers (Q. 45-2 p. 535 and onwards) is a correspondence respecting the mission of Bowles and his party of Cherokees on their arrival at Quebec from the Bahamas. "The sum of Lord Dorchester's letter to Mr. Grenville respecting the deputation which His Lordship had tried in vain to dissuade from going to London is in the last paragraphs of the letter." Lord Dorchester says: "Their resentment against the States, arising from injudicious encroachments upon their territory, might be appeased by ensuring them a more liberal treatment under the King's protection." On March 7, 1791, Lord Grenville wrote to Lord Dorchester, reporting their arrival and stating the reception they met with in the following terms: "Such of their requests as related to views of hostility against the United States have met with no kind of encouragement, but they will in some degree be gratified in their wish of intercourse with the British Dominions by an admission to the free posts [ports] in His Majesty's West Indian Islands, supposing that they should find themselves in a situation to avail themselves of this indulgence."

² F. O. America I.

XVI. WM. A. BOWLES TO THE SPANISH AMBASSADOR AT LONDON.¹

ADELPHI Jany. 26th 1791

Sir

I had the honor of inclosing to your Excellency in a letter from New Providence in the Bahama Islands A letter addressed to El Conde de Florida Blanca upon some subjects that concern the Nation of Creek and Cherrokee Indians. I requested him to favour me with an answer thereto, through your Excellency, trusting that I should, on my arrival here meet with some answer.

The object of my coming to this Country is not likely to keep me a great length of time here. And it is very material not only to the Affairs of our Nation but to the interest of his Catholic Majesty in those parts that I should receive some answer to that letter before I leave this Country.

I now trouble your Excellency to know whether you have received from El Conde de Florida Blanca any thing which is intended to be communicated to me. And I shall be ready to receive it in writing whenever your Excellency pleases.

I shall also be ready to confer with your Excellency if you should think it necessary.

I have the honor to be yours

Most obedient Servant

WM. A. BOWLES

His Catholick Majesty's Ambassador at London

XVII. GEO. BECKWITH TO [LORD DORCHESTER?] ²

PHILADELPHIA 2nd December 1791

My Lord

I did not intend to write to your Lordship by the present Conveyance had not the following circumstance which respects a man with whose character you are well acquainted taken place upon the Georgia frontier.

The field officer commanding the few companies or regular troops dispersed along the Southern confines has within a few days past written to Government that the Commissioners employed in running the boundary with Georgia under the Creek treaty of 1790 have been interrupted in their progress and compelled to withdraw by the Lower Creeks at the instigation of a Mr. Bowles who styles himself a General and declares that he is agent or superintendent General to those tribes from Great Britain; the officer also informs that Mr. Bowles has been recently in England, that he touched at the Bahamas on his return to America and that he has brought very valuable presents to these Indians to the amount "as he states" of fifty thousand pounds sterling, that he has declared to those tribes his being authorized to promise them the reestablishment of their old boundary with Georgia which is more advantageous to them than that fixed by the treaty of New York in 1790, and, that he has

¹ Enclosed in above.

² F. O. America K.

solicited their having recourse to Arms to effect this, promising them an English reinforcement in the Spring, to which the Indians replied, that prior to their commencing hostilities they would wait the arrival of these succours. General Macgillivray who is usually in the Upper Creek Country has written to those tribes and warning them of their danger in listening to Bowles's insinuations and threatening if they do that he will abandon them to their fate. Such is the outline of the information on this subject which has been laid before the Senate and which of course I immediately communicated to the King's Minister.

I have some reason to think that Mr. Edward Rutledge of South Carolina is the person intended to be sent to London as Minister Plenipotentiary but I mention this as a matter of uncertainty. I have also the same grounds to believe that it is the wish of this Government to draw the Chiefs of the hostile Indians to Philadelphia as soon as they can open an Intercourse with them and to make treaty with them here. I have mentioned my ideas on these subjects to Mr. Hammond.¹

I have the honor to be with great respect

Your Lordships

Most obedient and very faithful Servant

GEO. BECKWITH.

¹ The English minister to the United States.

1. *English Policy Toward America in 1790-1791.*

(*Second Installment.*)

XVIII. STEPHEN COTTRELL TO W. W. GRENVILLE.¹

Office of Committee
of Privy Council for Trade
Whitehall 17th of April 1790

Sir

I am directed by the Lords of His Majesty's most Honorable Privy Council, appointed for all matters relating to Trade and Foreign Plantations, to acquaint you that They have taken into consideration the Memorial of Mr. Levi Allen in behalf of the Inhabitants of Vermont, setting forth that he has been appointed under the Great Seal of the State of Vermont pursuant to an Act of the General Assembly there, to negotiate a *Commercial* and *Friendly* Intercourse between the said State and His Majesty's Dominions and proposing certain Arrangements for that purpose; which Memorial you transmitted to the Lords of the Committee in your Letter of the 10th June last; and you desire in the said Letter to receive, for His Majesty's information the opinion of Their Lordships concerning the Steps which it may be proper to take in consequence of Mr. Allen's Proposals.

The said Mr. Levi Allen has also presented a Memorial dated the 13th June last to this Committee expressing the Wishes of the Inhabitants of Vermont that a free Trade may be granted them with the Province of Quebec for all or any of the Produce of the said Country of Vermont without payment of Duty; and that they may be permitted to receive in return any of the Produce of Canada and any Merchandize imported therein, Furs and Peltry of all Kinds excepted.

Besides this Memorial the Committee have in their Office several Papers received from Lord Dorchester concerning the Policy of opening and facilitating a Passage into Canada, and from thence down the River St. Lawrence into the Atlantic for all Commodities, being the Growth or Produce of the Countries which border upon Canada and make either a part of the Territories of the United States of America, or belong to the State of Vermont, or to other People of various descriptions, who are now forming new Settlements in that part of the World.

While the Commercial Intercourse between the Province of Quebec and the Territories belonging to the United States of America, was under

¹ Chatham MSS. Bdlle 343. Compare *Report Canadian Archives*, 1890, p. 132.

annual Regulations, established by His Majesty's Order in Council, Care was taken that no Restriction should be laid on the Trade carried on either by Land or Inland Navigation, between the said Provinces and the Territories of the United States, or other Countries bordering on the said Province ; and in an Act passed in the 28th year of His Majesty's Reign for making permanent Regulations for this purpose, the same Policy of laying no Restrictions of the nature before mentioned was pursued. And the Lords of the Committee having had this Subject under their consideration of the 13th July 1787—gave it as their Opinion to Lord Sydney, then one of His Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, that it should be left to Lord Dorchester, Governor of Quebec with the Advice of the legislative Council of that Province, to make such Orders respecting any Intercourse by Land or by Inland Navigation between the said Province and the Territories belonging to the United States of America, as should be thought by them to be most proper, not doubting that the Orders which His Lordship, with the Advice of the said Council, should give, would be consistent with the Laws of Great Britain and most conducive to the Interests of His Majesty's Subjects ; but the Committee at the same time advised, that Lord Dorchester should be instructed on no account to permit, under pretence of such Intercourse, the Introduction into Canada of foreign Manufactures, or of Spirits made in any foreign Country or the Export from Canada into the neighbouring States of Furs and Peltry.

The Lords of the Committee, having received further Information on this Subject, and repeatedly taken the same into consideration are confirmed in the Opinion they before entertained that it will be advisable, in a commercial, and, they may add, in a political view also to permit, and even encourage all Articles, being the Growth and Produce of the Countries bordering upon Canada, to be brought into the said Province in exchange for British Merchandize and Manufactures, and to be Exported from thence down the River St. Lawrence, in British Ships to those parts of Europe or America where the Produce of Canada of the same sort may be legally carried. But when this Subject was before the Committee on the 13th July 1787 The Lords entertained a doubt, whether Goods, so brought into Canada from the neighbouring Countries, could be lawfully imported from thence into the British Dominions ; They consulted therefore His Majesty's Attorney and Solicitor General on this Point, whose Report has not been received till lately, stating that there is no Law which makes any distinction in this respect between Goods, the Growth and Produce of those Parts of America which belong to Foreign States and those belonging to the Crown of Great Britain, provided they are brought from the Ports of a British Colony, Plantation or Territory in America, in British Ships navigated according to Law.

It is the opinion of the Committee that such Intercourse would tend very much to promote the Sale of British Manufactures, and to increase the general Commerce and Navigation of this Country and the Committee still think that no Restrictions should be imposed on this Intercourse,

except those recommended in the before mentioned Letter addressed to Lord Sydney. And in order that the Government of Great Britain may have the full possession and command of this Trade, and be enabled to subject it to such Regulations as will render it most beneficial to His Majesty's Subjects, it is much to be wished that the vessels in which these Goods are transported over the great Lakes surrounding Canada, or along the Navigable Rivers, which issue from or run into these Lakes, should be British, and belong to British Subjects only, and that the posts which command the Entrance of these Lakes, and which are best situated for securing the Navigation of these Rivers should be retained by His Majesty (if other important Considerations will so permit) and be Garrisoned by a Force sufficient to defend them ; For there can be no doubt that the various Settlements which are now forming in the interior parts of America, afford the prospect of a most Extensive and valuable Commerce to those Nations who can secure to themselves the best means of availing themselves of it.

The Committee have hitherto considered this Subject, not only as it relates to the State of Vermont but to all the Countries bordering upon Canada :—Lord Dorchester and His Majesty's Council in the province of Quebec have thought proper to consider it in this general view, and to Extend the Regulations made by them for this purpose to all the neighbouring States, tho' these Regulations evidently took their Rise from the Application made by Mr. Levi Allen, in the name of the Province of Vermont only :—And the Committee observe with pleasure, that these Regulations are conformable to the principles before stated, as will appear by the following account of them

In consequence of Powers vested in three Commissioners by the State of Vermont, Mr. Levi Allen waited on Lord Dorchester at Quebec in 1786, informing him that he was commissioned by the State of Vermont to form a Treaty of Commerce, and produced his Credentials. Lord Dorchester told him that he was not authorized to form Treaties, but that he was well disposed to live in Friendship, with all the neighbouring States, and desired Mr. Allen to State in writing the wishes of the people of Vermont, and promised that they should be duly considered. Mr. Allen accordingly presented a Memorial to His Lordship on the 22d November 1786, specifying the objects which the people of Vermont had in view in desiring to open a Commercial Intercourse with Canada. On the 18th April 1787 Lord Dorchester permitted by Proclamation (until an Ordinance could be made by the Legislative Council for more fully regulating the Inland Trade with the neighbouring States) the free Importation from all the said States, thro' Lake Champlain, of Masts, Yards, Bowsprits, Spars, Oak or Pine, Planks, Boards, Knees, Futtocks, Ship Timber, Hoops, Staves, Shingles, Clapboards, or any sort of Lumber, Pitch, Tar, Turpentine, Tallow, or any kind of Naval Stores, Hemp, Flax, and their Seeds ; Wheat ; Rye, Indian Corn, Pease, Beans, Potatoes, Rice, Oats, Barley, and all other species of Grain, Horses, Neat Cattle, Sheep, Hogs, Poultry, and all other species of Live Stock and Live pro-

visions, and whatsoever else is of the Growth of the said States. And he also authorized and permitted the free Exportation from the province of Canada into the said States, of any Articles of the Growth, Produce or Manufacture of the said province, or of any other the Dominions of Great Britain, Furs and Peltries of any Kind excepted.

And by an Ordinance of the Governor and Legislative Council, dated 30th of the same month, it was enacted, that the Trade and Intercourse between the province of Quebec, and the neighbouring States, or any of them, by the Route of Lake Champlain and Sorell, should be free for the Importation of Leaf Tobacco, Pot and pearl Ashes, if the same be of the Growth and produce of any of the said States, and that they are bona fide intended for Re exportation from that province to Great Britain.

In the month of April in the year following Lord Dorchester and the Legislative Council of Quebec passed two other Ordinances, comprehending, in their Judgement, every thing that was at that time necessary for regulating the Inland Commercial Intercourse of that province with the Neighbouring States.

In the first of these Ordinances it is enacted That all Goods, Wares, and Merchandizes (Beavers Peltries and Furs excepted) of the Growth and Manufacture or product of that province or of any other of the Dominions of Great Britain, and such as may lawfully be imported into that province by Sea may be exported therefrom by Land or Inland Navigation to any of the neighbouring States, free from Duty Impost or Restraint: And it was also enacted that there be the like freedom of Importation from the said States into that province (if the same be made by the Route or Communication of Lake Champlain and the River Sorel or Richelieu and not otherwise) of certain enumerated articles. It then enumerates the Articles which are the same as those in the before mentioned proclamation and Ordinance, adding thereto Butter, Cheese, and Honey, Fresh Fish, Gold and Silver Coin and Bullion. The Ordinance then prohibits the Importation of Rum, Spirits, and Copper Coin and enacts several severe Regulations to prevent Contraband Trade contrary to the intention of this Ordinance.

The Second of these Ordinances, intituled "for promoting Inland Navigation," begins by a preamble reciting "that the present circumstances do not require that the Transport of Merchandize" and peltries over the Upper Lakes should be carried on solely by vessels "*belonging to His Majesty*, and that the thriving situation of the new Settlements of Loyalists in the Western Country makes it expedient under certain Restrictions to facilitate the Transport of a variety of Articles across those Lakes which will tend to increase the Exports of this province, and consequently to augment its Commerce.

It then enacts that it shall be lawful for all His Majesty's Subjects trading to the Western Country by the way of the Great Lakes who shall have taken out the usual pass conformable to Law, to cause such their Effects and Merchandize or [as?] shall be specified in the said pass, to be water borne in any Kind of vessel under the Burthen of Ninety Tons,

provided the same be built or launched in any Port or Place within His Majesty's Government ; and that all the owners of the Vessel and Cargo, and the Captain, Conductor, Crew and Navigators be His Majesty's Subjects, and that the said Crew and Navigators shall have taken (since the 1st May 1783) the Oath of Allegiance of His Majesty, prescribed by Law, or on doubt thereof, shall take the same before they embark in such adventure. The Ordinance then proceeds to require that every Vessel (except such as are under the Burthen of five Tons, navigating the River St Lawrence and the Bay of Quinty, and except all Canoes, Bateaux, or open Boats, under the Burthen of ten Tons navigating the Lakes) shall take out a Register. It requires also Bonds and several other Documents from all these vessels, forming on the whole a very accurate and strict system of Registry, and then enacts that all vessels concerned in this navigation, which shall not be furnished with a Register and the other Documents therein mentioned, and shall not produce the same to the Kings Officer in the Ports or Places where they arrive, shall be subject to Forfeiture. A power is given to the Governor or Commander in Chief of the Province for the time being, upon any great or urgent occasion to prohibit for any given time, by an Order under his Hand and Seal, even these Vessels from Navigating the said Lakes, if he may think such order necessary and for the security of the Province.

From the foregoing Account it appears to the Committee, that a Commercial Intercourse, is already opened between the Province of Quebec and the State of Vermont, as well as the other neighbouring States, upon as extensive a plan as the People of Vermont seem to have wished. It is true that this Commerce is not secured to them by Treaty. Lord Dorchester was of opinion as is before stated that he was not authorized to form a Treaty with them, and he might perhaps think that it would be offensive to the United States of America to form a Separate Treaty with a people who inhabit a Country, which the said States may consider as a part of their Territory ; a people who ought on that account to be dependent on them. It is impossible to suppose that Mr. Levi Allen can be ignorant that a Commercial Intercourse has been opened with the State of Vermont by the Government of Quebec in manner before mentioned, and as he still presses that a Treaty should be concluded it is reasonable to infer that he has some other object in view, besides the establishing a free Commerce between the Countries, and that he has probably received secret Instructions for this purpose.

To throw Light on this Point, the Committee think it right to state the Information they have lately received of the political situation of the State of Vermont.

The Country now inhabited by the People of Vermont was formerly claimed by the Legislatures of New Hampshire and New York who had frequent Disputes on this Subject. A number of Adventurers chiefly from the Territories of Massachusetts Bay and Connecticut, taking advantage of these Disputes went and fixed their Habitation in this Country, and have kept possession of it ever since. These Settlers had

at first no other appellation than that of Green Mountain Boys. But in December 1777 They assumed the Title of the State of Vermont and considering themselves as Independent, established a Form of Government ; and from that time they have continued in the exercise of all the Legislative and Executive powers belonging to an Independent State— In March 1787 a Bill passed the House of Assembly of the State of New York, declaring Vermont to be a separate Independent State ; but this Bill was rejected by the Senate of New York, because there was no provision made in it for securing to some of the Inhabitants of the State of New York, certain Lands claimed by them and which has [had ?] formerly been granted to them, while that State made a part of the British Dominions. In a subsequent Session the Legislature of New York appointed Commissioners on the part of Vermont in order to settle the Points in dispute. The event of this Conference is not yet known ; but whatever it may be, it will probably decide the opinion of the Legislature of New York concerning the Indepen[den]ce of Vermont. But there is reason to believe that the Congress lately established, will soon take this business into Consideration. Vermont has already between 70 and 80,000 Inhabitants, which is a greater number than belong to several States which now make a part of the American Confederacy. The Eastern States will be desirous from political Motives that Vermont should become a Member of the federal Government. They will wish to retain Vermont as a Frontier for their Security and there is ground to suppose that they are on that account apprehensive of its becoming connected and forming an alliance with the British Government. There is another Circumstance which inclines the Eastern States to wish that the State of Vermont should be acknowledged as Independent and made a Member of the Union.

The Settlement of Kentuck,¹ which consists of about as many Inhabitants as that of Vermont, and which at present makes a part of the State of Virginia, has applied both to the Legislature of Virginia and to Congress to be acknowledged as an Independent State, and to have a voice in the Federal Government. The State of Virginia who find their present Connection with Kentuck to be both Expensive and inconvenient are inclined to the proposed Separation, and many of the Members of Congress have shown a Disposition to acknowledge the Independence of the people of Kentuck and to admit them into the Union, but the Eastern States are not disposed to consent unless the State of Vermont be at the same time admitted as they apprehend that the influence of the Southern States in Congress will become too powerful by the accession of Kentuck unless it is counterbalanced by the addition of a new Member connected in Interest with the Eastern States. From Information received it is probable that this point was brought into Discussion during the Second Session of Congress which commenced in January last.

¹ The spelling is doubtful, perhaps it should read Kentucte here and following.

The foregoing facts sufficiently explain the Impatience shewn at present by the Agent of Vermont to be informed of the Intention of the British Government with respect to an Alliance with the State of Vermont.

It belongs not to the Committee to decide how far any Article in the late Treaty of Peace, by which the Independence of the United States was acknowledged and the Extent of their Territories defined, may make it improper for the Government of this Country to form a separate Treaty with the State of Vermont, or whether it may be politically prudent all circumstances considered, to risk giving offence to the Congress of the United States by such a Measure ; but the Lords are of opinion that in a commercial view it will be for the Benefit of this Country to prevent Vermont and Kentuck and all the other Settlements now forming in the Interior parts of the great Continent of North America, from becoming dependent on the Government of the United States, or on that of any other Foreign Country, and to preserve them on the contrary in a State of Independence, and to induce them to form Treaties of Commerce and Friendship with Great Britain.

Besides the State of Vermont and the Settlement of Kentuck, six other Settlements are said to be already forming in the interior parts of the American Continent, some of them by encouragement from the United States ; others under the Protection of the Spanish Government ; and some appear to have no connection hitherto with any Foreign Power. There can be no doubt, that the Numbers of People in these Settlements will very rapidly increase partly by the ordinary course of Population, and partly by Emigrants from the United States, and by others who may resort to them from the Nations of Europe. As People of this description must for a Number of years be principally employed in raising Provisions, and such other Articles as are best adapted to the Nature of the Soil, which they possess, and to the Climate, under which they live, it is evident that during that period at least, they will be under the necessity of importing from Foreign Countries such Manufactures and other Commodities as contribute most to the comfort and enjoyment of Life and whatever Nation is best able to supply them with these Merchandizes at a reasonable rate, cannot fail to derive great commercial Advantages from their Intercourse with them.

The Countries where all the before mentioned Settlers (except those of Vermont) have fixed their residence are separated from the Countries inhabited by the People of the United States, and from the Atlantic Ocean by a large Ridge of Mountains which must be passed, if they attempt to open by that Way any commercial Intercourse. The Expence of Land-Carriage over these Mountains will so enhance the Price of any Commodities, which they may wish to purchase, as to make it very expensive and difficult for them to obtain Supplies by that mode of Conveyance ; and it will still be less practicable to convey the Produce of the Soil in which these Settlers must make their Returns, being all bulky Articles, over these Mountains to the Heads of the Rivers, that run from the

foot of them into the Atlantic. It is clear that even the People of Vermont, who are more conveniently situated for a Commercial Intercourse with the United States, find that such Intercourse by Land-Carriage is by no means so practicable, or likely to be so profitable to them, as a direct Trade with Canada, carried on by means of Lake Champlain, and from thence into the River St Lawrence. It is certain therefore that the various Settlements that are now forming in the interior Parts of the American Continent, will wish to open a Communication with Foreign Nations, either by passing the great Lakes and from thence into the River St Lawrence, or by descending through the various Rivers, that run into the Mississippi, and by following the Course of that River into the Ocean. There appears to be no other practicable Channels by which these Settlers can carry on the sort of Commerce in which they will necessarily be engaged, and there are Circumstances which make it probable, that the Passage over the great Lakes and by the River St Lawrence will be found of the Two to be much the most convenient. It will be fortunate for Great Britain if this Channel continues exclusively under her Command; for the Commerce, so carried on, will be attended with this singular advantage that the Ships employed in it must belong wholly to the subjects of the British Empire. It appears from Information lately received that the People of Kentuck are desirous of forcing their way down the River Mississippi to the Ocean. They have already applied to the Congress of the United States for obtaining through their Influence with the Court of Spain, a free Navigation on that River. They found their claim to it upon the Right naturally resulting from the possession of the Countries bordering on the Rivers flowing into the Mississippi; and they alledge that by the Treaty of Peace of 1763, between England France and Spain, the free Navigation of the River Mississippi was secured to England and was exercised till the Peace of 1783, and that, by the Treaty then made with America, England ceded to the United States the free Navigation of that River.

The Spaniards are very jealous of any Communication which the Americans may wish to have, by means of the River Mississippi, either with the Indians, or any other Persons settled in the interior Countries of America. To prevent such Communication they now employ British Agents, Subjects of His Majesty and attached to the British Interests to manage the Indians in the Southern Parts of this Continent and to supply them with British Manufactures which are sent out annually from Great Britain by Vessels under the protection of Passes given by the Spanish Ambassador residing in London; And these Manufactures are paid for by great Quantities of Deer Skins and some other Peltry, permitted to be exported from Spanish Ports in British Ships directly to Great Britain. There is every reason also to believe, that a very lucrative Commerce is now carried on from the Port of Providence in the Bahamas and from the Free Ports in the Island of Jamaica to the Spanish Ports in the two Floridas which is at least connived at by the Spanish Government in order to prevent the People of the United States from

obtaining any Influence over the Indians and having any share in this Trade.¹

It cannot be doubted that the Navigation of the River Mississippi will soon give rise to many contests between the Government of Spain and the American Congress, who will wish to support the Settlers in the interior Parts of America in the claims they may urge on this account, with a view to secure to themselves the Friendship of these new Settlements, and thereby to open to the Vessels of the United States the Entrance of the River Mississippi.

What may be the Issue of these Contests it is not possible at present with any degree of certainty to foretell, nor is it prudent yet to pronounce what ought to be the Conduct of Great Britain in this respect ; It is proper however for the Committee to observe, that there will be less danger in encouraging the Navigation of Spain in those Seas than that of the United States and that the Ships of these States are more to be apprehended, as Commercial Rivals than those belonging to the Subjects of the Spanish Monarchy.

The Committee have thought it right, that I should enter into this detail in delivering Their Opinion on the Question you referred to Them by His Majesty's Command concerning a Commercial Intercourse with the State of Vermont. It appears to them that the same Policy, which ought to direct the Conduct of Government with respect to Vermont applies equally in a Commercial Light to all the other Settlements, that are forming in the interior parts of the American Continent and that no true Judgement can be formed of the measures which ought on this occasion to be pursued without taking comprehensive view of this Subject in all its Parts, especially at a time when there is reason to suppose that a Commercial Treaty may soon be negotiated with the Congress of the United States of America, at a time also, when the Committee observe, with the highest satisfaction, that the Manufactures of this country are improving and progressively increasing in so great a degree, that it is necessary to seek for new Markets in every Part of the World, in order to afford sufficient Scope and further Encouragement to the Industry of His Majesty's Subjects.

I have the Honor to be, With great respect
Sir

Your most obedient
And most humble Servant

STEPH. COTTRELL

¹ See the documents relating to Bowles.

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